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TAGS: OPRC KPAO KMDR PREL
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: US RELIEF EFFORTS IN HAITI; 01/21-22/10;
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SUMMARY

¶1. In contrast to January 20 headlines, which highlighted the U.S. military deployment, Argentine dailies on January 21-22 focused primarily on the January 20 aftershock and early signs of recovery. The Charge d'Affaires' January 20 interviews with public news agency Telam, the country's most popular radio station (Radio 10), and top two newspapers (La Nacion and Clarin), stressing the humanitarian nature of U.S. relief efforts, received wide coverage. Criticism of the U.S. role was limited to a few articles, with Argentine journalists on the ground in Port-au-Prince reporting on the positive impact of relief efforts. End summary.

CHARGE D'AFFAIRES STRESSES

U.S. HUMANITARIAN MISSION

¶2. Charge d' Affaires Tom Kelly granted press interviews to state-owned Telam news agency, Radio 10, daily-of-record La Nacion, and leading circulation newspaper Clarin, resulting in positive coverage from most local media. Saying the U.S. government was trying to downplay accusations that it was planning to occupy Haiti, center-right La Nation quoted the CDA's remarks that the U.S. intentions are "honest" and that the U.S. is coordinating relief efforts with other nations.

http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1_224303

¶3. Argentina's largest circulation daily, Clarin, headlined an article with a quote from the CDA that Haiti "is a good example why we have the Fourth Fleet," highlighting the CDA's remarks stressing the humanitarian nature of the mission. Clarin also reported his remarks that the U.S. presence came at the request of the Haitian government, and that U.S. efforts resulted in the rescue of 42 out of the 122 survivors. The article also reported the CDA's remarks that accusations of a military deployment were "unfounded."

¶14. Under the headline "U.S. praises Argentina," financial paper El Cronista quotes the CDA as saying "Argentine support in Haiti has been very important." The paper highlights that the U.S. praised the Argentine Mobile Hospital's endeavors in Haiti, featuring Kelly's remarks that it was "the only medical facility that provided permanent medical care throughout the crisis."

<http://www.cronista.com/notas/218546-eeuu-elo-gia-la-ayuda-la-argentina>

¶15. Right-leaning Infobae picked up the CDA's interview with Radio 10, stressing the "heroic" work of the Argentine hospital which "saved many lives." It also quotes the CDA as saying that "armed forces are not only used for combat, but they provide logistical capabilities and are very flexible." The article quotes Kelly as saying that "there is no alternative but sending troops to Haiti...; without that logistical support it would be difficult to alleviate the crisis."

<http://www.infobae.com/mundo/496368-601275-0-Es-heroico-el-trabajo-argentino-Hait>

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¶16. State-run news agency Telam cited the CDA's remarks that "there was no other alternative for the U.S. It was either doing it this way or letting Haitians die." The interview also mentions that the U.S. coordinated efforts with the U.N. The CDA stressed, "Multilateral efforts are very important... Obviously, in an operation this size there will be misunderstandings, but I would say that the response from the international community has been a great success." http://www.telam.com.ar/vernota.php?tipo=N&dis=1&sec=1&idPub=175058&id=336711&idnota=33_6711

¶17. An editorial published in La Nation on January 22 strongly echoed the CDA's remarks, with a subheadline reading: "The rapid determination of the United States to assist the Caribbean country in numerous ways made it possible to save many lives." The article notes that the U.S. decision to deploy troops was based on the need to establish order and provide urgent medical assistance after the chaos caused by the earthquake -- joining the efforts of the international community. The author also calls criticisms by Chavez and others "inopportune and unacceptable."

http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1_224614

... BUT SOME CRITICISM OF
U.S. TROOP DEPLOYMENT CONTINUES

¶18. Telam and Ambito Financiero on January 22 expressed concerns about Deputy PermRep Wolff's remarks that U.S. troops would need to remain in Haiti for the "long-term." However, Telam also quoted Wolff as saying that security remained under the control of the Haitian authorities and that cooperation efforts were being led by the UN.

¶19. An article published in pro-government Buenos Aires Economico on January 21 accused the U.S. of "having manipulated Haitian politicians and governments since the '70s." The author concluded that this history explains why Haitians fear what is ahead and repudiate such military presence, regardless of the fact that a

Nobel Peace Laureate ordered it." Meanwhile, left-leaning independent paper Critica headlined "Marines disturb the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA)," quoting critical comments made by Venezuelan President Chavez, Nicaraguan Daniel Ortega and Bolivian Evo Morales about the U.S. military deployment in Haiti.

<http://www.criticadigital.com/impresa/index.php?secc=nota&nid=37264>

ENVOYS DESCRIBE IMPROVING SITUATION

¶10. On January 21, La Nacion's journalist on the ground described a deteriorating situation in Haiti, claiming that U.S. relief efforts had failed to reach many Haitians. On January 22, however, the headline read "First signs of rebirth in Haiti."

¶11. Clarin's reporter in Haiti underscored January 21 that U.S. relief efforts are aimed at "supporting the normalization" of the country. She also noted that Haiti asked Washington to take charge of the injured and asked the U.S. Federal Reserve to print all the money that will be necessary to rebuild the country. Under the January 22 headline "Aid starts to arrive in Haiti," she reports that the security in the country has begun to improve thanks to the efforts of the UN and the U.S. military.

http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1_224377

<http://www.clarin.com/diario/2010/01/21/elmundo/i-02124147.htm>

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KELLY
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